UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS

Episode #33

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12:30 to 1:30 P.M. C.D.S.T. SEPTEMBER 8, 1932 THURSDAY

ANNOUNCER: And now -- "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers".

ORCHESTRA: QUARTET

ANNOUNCER:

Now to the National Forest, where Ranger Jim Robbins, and his young assistant, Jerry Quick, are on the job, as guardians and managers of the Pine Cone Ranger District. You remember how two weeks ago the big Bald Mountain fire raged through the forest, taking its toll of devastated timber and of human life, and how Jim and Jerry fought night and day to get it under control. But they did get it stopped, and saved the Forest from even greater destruction. -- Even after the fires are out, the rangers have still more work to do on them, for they must survey and map the burned area and prepare a detailed report. --- Today we find our friends at the Pine Cone Ranger Station, at work on the report of the Bald Mountain fire.

JERRY: Well, Jim, I've got the Bald Mountain fire map finished.

JIM: Yeah? Have you computed the area?

JERRY: Yes. I'll give you two guesses how much it covered.

JIM: You know I estimated 2,000 acres, I think that's pretty close.

JERRY: It's closer than my guess was. I guessed 2,500.

JIM: Well, let's have it. What does it measure?

JERRY: 1,790 acres.

JIM: Does that include the spot fires too, Jerry?

JERRY: Yep. Everything. (laughs) That's quite a different story from some of the stories that came out while the fire was burning. One paper reported 20,000 acres.

JIM: Yes. At such times the stories are usually exaggerated. -- But it's bad enough as it is. -- Nearly 1800 acres of fine timber gone -- not to mention a life lost and the money it cost to fight it.

JERRY: By the way, I telephoned the supervisor's office yesterday to get the cost figures for this report. The clerk said he'd let me know today. Has he called?

JIM: Yes, called this morning. Said he hadn't been able to get a line on all the bills but its going to run over $8,000. We'll use that figure in the report and he'll make a correction as soon as he gets the exact amount.

JERRY: $8,000? Gosh, that's a lot of money to spend on a fire that never should have started.

JIM: Yes, and think what it would have cost if we hadn't stopped it when we did.

JERRY: Then there's the damage to the Forest besides.

JIM: Yes, I've got my cruise of the timber worked up. It shows a little more than 9 million feet of mature timber killed.

JERRY: What are you going to use for valuation?

JIM: Two and a half a thousand feet. That's what we are selling the Winding Creek timber for and this timber was every bit as good. That makes the loss on the merchantable timber $22,500. Besides that we'll have to figure something for the young timber destroyed.

JERRY: Yes, there was a nice stand of young stuff all over the area. When the fire went into those clumps of young trees it just seemed to explode.

JIM: It sure was hot up on the head end that morning Bert Ellsworth came up. He got one side of his face blistered. It's still peeling.

JERRY: Well, I'll confess, Jim, I've secretly hoped for a long time that some day I might see a big forest fire. I don't know now what gave me a crazy idea like that, because I'm certainly fed up and I never want to see another.

JIM: Yes Jerry. A man who has never had to stand in front of one never knows how terrible they are.

JERRY: You know Jim, I can't get that young fellow that got killed out of my mind. That tree kicking back on him. — It kinda gets me. — Gosh, I can't sleep at night.

JIM: I've noticed ever since the fire you've had a case of nerves, Jerry. This is your first fire season and she's been a tough one. A bad fire season'll sometimes even get us old timers on edge. — Why don't you take a little leave and go visit your mother? It's late enough in the fire season so the supervisor could let you off.

JERRY: I'd like to Jim, but I can't. I can't afford it. You see I've got some family debts I'm paying off. — And I want to begin getting something ahead too, soon as I can — for something.

JIM: (chuckles) For something, eh? Well, now that school-ma'm's a pretty fine girl, I reckon.

JERRY: Say -- who said anything about the school teacher?

JIM: (chuckles)

JERRY: Any way, I can't take any leave this year, Jim.

JIM: That's too bad -- the trip would sure do you a lot of good. -- Well, let's get back to that fire report.

JERRY: Yes, let's get it finished. It's beginning to get my goat too. Here all these questions on cause of the fire. Character of the ground cover, time of origin, time first reported. Get away time, elapsed time arrival at fire, arrival of reinforcements, total men employed, miles of fire line constructed and a lot more. What on earth do they want all that dope for? Nobody will ever use it.

JIM: That's just where you're wrong, Jerry. Studying the history of past fires has been the biggest factor in our fire protection progress. For instance from the fire reports we learn that 90% of our fires are man-caused -- that smokers are responsible for about one out of every five -- and that the direction and strength of the wind determines how many fire fighters to send. Everyone of those questions call for useful information to help us prevent fires or help us to use better judgement in fighting them.

JERRY: By George you're right. I knew we ahad all that "dope" but I never stopped to think where it came from.

JIM: Besides the Board of Review will need all this information for its investigation.

JERRY: You mean the Board of Review is going to investigate the way we handled this fire?

JIM: Sure.

JERRY: What for? Didn't we do a good job? Didn't we work our heads off on it? I'd like to know who could have done any more than we did?

JIM: Yes Jerry, we did the best we could, but who knows -- some of it might have been done better. Nobody would ever know whether we did the best that could be done unless the job is reviewed. The successes of tomorrow depend on the experiences of today, you know.

JERRY: I guess you're right -- let 'em come, I'm not ashamed of my part of the job.

JIM: Of course you're not. You did a fine job but this review is an opportunity to learn what was actually the best way to handle this fire. It takes the guess work and snap judgement out of fire fighting. -- And it'll help you to get a more impersonal attitude toward the job, and not let it wear out your nerves.

JERRY: Yeah, I know. This whole fire job is beginning to get me down.

JIM: That's one of the lessons we have to learn Jerry. Don't let the job get your goat. (Telephone rings) I guess that's our ring, ain't it?

JERRY: I'll get it Jim. (to phone) Hello -- Jim? Yes, he's right here. Yes, this is Jerry. -- Oh thanks, Mr. Ellsworth -- Well, I just did what anyone would have done. We had to stop that fire and -- Well thanks very much. I'm glad you appreciate my work -- I mean I'm glad you think I did a good job -- Yeah, I'll let you talk to Jim. (To Jim) It's the Supervisor. He praised my work on the fire.

JIM: Glad to hear it, Jerry. -- Wants to talk to me, does he? (to phone) Hello Bert? How you feeling? -- That's good. Your face through peeling yet? (laughs) Just like a new man, eh? Does your wife think it improved your looks? (chuckles) Wouldn't recommend it for a beauty treatment, eh? Well, I'm glad it wasn't any worse Bert. That fire was sure hot, wasn't it? -- The report? Jerry and I are working on it now. It'll go in the mail today. -- Yes the damage mounts up to a pretty good figure Bert. -- It's a bad blow to the forest. -- The man that started the fire? Yes, Jerry and I have been doing a little detective work. I think we have a good case -- We're keeping kinda quiet about it. I'll bring all the evidence to your office in a day or two and we can give it to the United States Commissioner. -- Do you think he'll present it to the Grand Jury this session? -- Well that's good. Maybe we'll have a conviction. -- All right, Bert, goodbye. (Hangs up)

BESS: (entering) Who are you talking to now, Jim?

JIM: Hello, Bess. -- That was Bert Ellsworth.

BESS: Oh, I wish I'd known it was he. I've just finished a big batch of choke cherry jelly and I was just wondering if Mrs. Ellsworth wouldn't enjoy some of it.

JIM: Sure she would. I'm going to the office in a day or two and I'll take some in to them.

JERRY: Mr. Ellsowrth gave me a big compliment on my work on the fire, Mrs. Robbins. That helps some, anyhow.

BESS: Oh, I'm so glad. You surely deserved it.

JIM: Yep. He did, Bess. -- Well, what's up? Want us to come to dinner?

BESS: Not yet, Jim. -- But the things are on the stove and I guess I'd better give you first notice now so you'll come when I <u>am</u> ready.

JIM: You bet we'll come.

BESS: (Bantering) Oh, you will? -- You know, Jerry, I've about given up trying to get Jim to come to meals when he's called. He always has something he wants to finish up first.

JERRY: Yeah, I've noticed that.

BESS: For a while I tried calling him <u>before</u> I was ready, so that by the time he got around to coming, I'd have everything on the table, but (laughs) he fooled me one time and came as soon as he was called and things weren't ready yet. -- So that doesn't work any more. I don't know what I'm going to do with him.

JIM: (chuckles) Well, now, that <u>is</u> a tough problem. But I reckon you won't need to worry about it today, though. Jerry and I'll be right there when the grub's ready, -- eh, Jerry?

JERRY: I'll say. -- Are you going to sign that fire report? I wanta get it off my mind.

JIM: (chuckles) Well, now, Jerry's trying to rush me into signing this report he worked up.

JERRY: It's all right, isn't it?

JIM: Yep, you did first rate, Jerry. I reckon I can put the old John Henry to it without a qualm.

BESS: Of course Jerry would do it all right.

JIM: Now there Bess, you're going to have my young assistant here plum spoiled.

BESS: Oh, no -- not Jerry.

JERRY: Gee. I'm glad somebody sticks up for me. -- Got 'er signed, Jim?

JIM: Yep, there you are. --

JERRY: Gosh. I'm sure glad to be through with it. -- Do you want to sign this other report here while you're at it? It's the report on that little Class A fire we had day before yesterday. It didn't amount to much.

JIM: I wouldn't speak so slightingly of a Class A fire, Jerry. Just because it was under a quarter of an acre in size is no sign that a complete and detailed record of it won't be useful. Every little fire is a potential big fire, if we don't get it out in time.

JERRY: That's right too. I guess it's just as important to know why we were able to keep a fire from spreading as it is to know why one got away from us.

JIM: Yep. We never do so good but what we could do it a little better.

JERRY: Always room for improvement. -- That doggone Bald Mountain fire knocked our season's record sky high.

JIM: It makes a pretty bad spot on our map, all right.

JERRY: Gee, I sure hope we can keep 'em down the rest of the season, anyhow. Another bad fire, and we'd have the worst record of any forest in the region.

BESS: Oh, I certainly hope we don't have any more fires. My heavens! We've had enough already.

JERRY: I'm getting sick of the whole business. Gosh! Another fire'd just about set me crazy!

(PHONE RINGS)

JERRY: There's the phone again. I got 'er. (to phone) Hello - huh? -- Oh my gosh! -- (to Jim) Jim! It's another fire!

JIM: Yeah?

JERRY: Heck! There goes our fire record gally west! (almost weeping). Good gosh, Jim, why do we have to keep having fires?!!

JIM: (Quietly) Get the location on 'er, Jerry.

JERRY: (to phone) Hello! -- Hello! Where is it, Pete? --- yeah -- yeah --

(FADEOUT WITH JERRY TALKING ON PHONE)

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

(FADE IN WITH SIREN, OFF)

(SOUND OF FIRE TRUCK MOTOR, UP, CONTINUES THROUGH FOLLOWING)

JERRY: Step on 'er, Johnny! -- Look, there's the smoke up ahead there. -- Give 'er the siren around that bend, Johnny. -- (SIREN) Look, it's right close to the road. That's good. -- All right, pull 'er up here, Johnny.

JOHNNY: Okay.

(MOTOR STOPS)

JERRY: (Raising voice) All right, fellows! Let's get on 'er!

(SOUND OF CLANKING OF TOOLS. SHOUTS OF MEN, OFF)

JERRY: (Shouting) Get the hose strung out! -- That's it! -- (anxiously) Gosh, Johnny, it's a bad day to have a fire! She could get away from us awful easy. -- (shouting) Hey, gimme one of those back pack pumps -- That's right. ---

(CRACKLE OF FLAMES, UP. SHOUTING AND SOUND OF DIGGING TOOLS, OFF)

JERRY: (muttering angrily at fire) Blaze up, will yuh?! There, how do yuh like that? (sizzle of water on flames) -- Doggone yuh! -- (shouting) Hey, get the hose on 'er here! (Sound of splash of water) -- Good! --

JOHNNY: (off) Watch out there, Jerry, you'll get yer pants burnt right off yuh.

JERRY: (shouting) Never mind me -- (muttering anxiously) Doggonit, we <u>can't</u> let 'er get away from us -- (fading off) We can't <u>let</u> 'er --

(FADEOUT WITH SOUNDS OF WATER, SHOUTING, CRACKLE AND SIZZLE OF FLAMES, ETC. MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

JERRY: Well, Johnny, we got 'er corralled.

JOHNNY: I'll say -- and plenty quick too.

JERRY: Yeah. Held 'er to a quarter-acre. -- Help me finish getting this portable phone hooked up here, will yuh, Johnny? I wanta call Jim.

JOHNNY: Sure. Lemme drive in the ground rod, here. (Sound of driving iron rod in ground) -- There, is she okay now?

JERRY: I'll try 'er -- (faint ring) -- Hello -- hello, is that you, Jim? -- Say, Jim: We got the fire stopped already. -- Yeah, it <u>was</u> quick work, if I do say so. -- Sure, we got the hose on 'er from the truck tank -- Uh huh, I'm going to leave a couple of the boys to mop up and patrol it this afternoon -- Yeah, I guess that saves our fire record from getting any worse -- so far. Say lissen, Jim. I feel better now - Yeah. I guess I kinda worked it outa my system on that fire today. -- Yeah, let 'em come. I'm ready for any <u>old fire</u> now. -- Great! I'll be back to the station in a jiffy ---

(FADEOUT)

ANNOUNCER:

Well, folks, it looked like the fires had Jerry worried but I guess now he's feeling better. There are times when things sort of wear you down, you know, and a long, hard fire season sometimes leaves a Ranger played out and with nerves on edge. Forest fires, caused largely by human carelessness, have been all too plentiful on the Pine Cone Ranger District this year, but while the fire season lasts we can be sure that Jim and Jerry will be constantly alert to the danger and ready to give instant battle to protect the national forest from loss.

Next Thursday at this same hour, Ranger Jim and Jerry will be with us again. "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers" comes to you as a presentation of the National Broadcasting Company, with the cooperation of the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture. The role of Jim Robbins played by Harvey Hayes, others in today's cast were:

pmp - 3:55 P. M.

September 7, 1932.